



# The ISC Newsletter

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## Editor

J. Richard Greenwell

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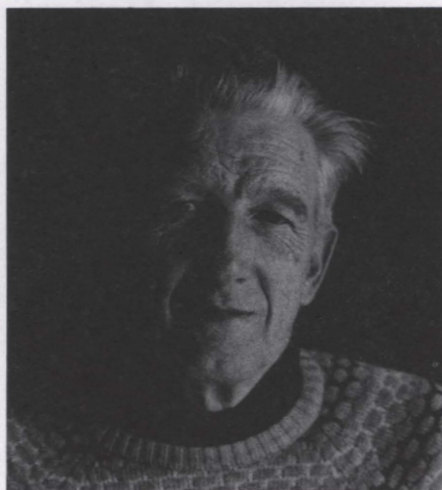
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## INTERVIEW

### DOES THE SASQUATCH EXIST AND WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT? IN A WIDE-RANGING INTERVIEW, JOHN GREEN ADDRESSES THE PROBLEM



John Green.

John Green is considered the most knowledgeable authority on the Sasquatch (Bigfoot) problem. A native of Vancouver, he entered service in the Royal Canadian Navy at the tail end of World War II. He then pursued academic studies, and obtained a B.A. at the University of British Columbia and an M.S. in journalism at Columbia University. He first worked for several daily newspapers in Toronto, Vancouver, and Victoria, and then acquired his own newspaper in Agassiz, British Columbia.

When he first heard of the Sasquatch, Mr. Green did not take the subject seriously, but in 1957 he realized that reports by reliable eyewitnesses existed. In 1958, he heard about the "Bigfoot" tracks being found in Bluff Creek, in northern California, and he went there to see them for himself. As a result, he became involved in the hunt for the Sasquatch in the early 1960's in both California and

British Columbia, and became convinced that a real animal--not just myth--was involved.

In 1968, Mr. Green published the booklet, *On the Track of Sasquatch*, followed in 1970 by *Year of the Sasquatch* (both republished in updated editions in 1980), and in 1973 *The Sasquatch File*. For several years afterwards, he worked full time on Sasquatch investigations, visiting various parts of the United States, where he interviewed witnesses and exchanged information with other investigators. This led to his 1978 book, *Sasquatch: The Apes Among Us*, considered the most comprehensive volume on the topic today.

Now retired from newspaper work, Mr. Green continues to catalog all the Sasquatch information he obtains, and his files now contain over 2,000 reports. He hopes to study the data generated by the reports with the aid of a computer he recently acquired. Mr. Green was elected an Honorary Member of the International Society of Cryptozoology in 1987. The opinions he expresses below, however, are his own, and do not reflect any policies or positions established by the Society. He was interviewed by Newsletter Editor J. Richard Greenwell.

**Greenwell:** There are many problems associated with Sasquatch research, some social, some psychological, some related to physical evidence. From your perspective, what do you think are the main impediments to advancing our knowledge on this topic?



Green: I guess the main impediment is that there are not enough resources, not even a tiny fraction of the needed resources to have a legitimate hope of ever getting any results. Most of the people involved are untrained and without too much time because they have to make a living otherwise; they don't have much equipment, and they are really just depending on dumb luck. I would say that some major agencies or institutions have got to take a really serious try at it, at least on the scale that the Chinese did in the 1970s, when they had several scientists and people apparently numbering in the hundreds working for a period of over a year.

Greenwell: Isn't it sort of a circular problem, though? You need more resources to get the evidence, but you're probably not going to get the resources until you first get the evidence and prove your case. How do you break that vicious cycle?

Green: I've never been able to break it.

Greenwell: So, essentially, that's one of the main reasons Sasquatch has continued to be an unresolved problem for decades.

Green: I couldn't disagree with that.

Greenwell: Before you go on, I'd like to ask you what is perhaps an unfair question; but perhaps it isn't. Are you convinced that, in fact, there is a Sasquatch, a large, unknown, bipedal primate not recognized by science surviving today in North America? Are you convinced that such an animal does exist?

Green: Yes, I am. I think that to try to explain the existing phenomena by the only other explanation, that this is all a human production, becomes far more involved--Occam's Razor cuts on the side of the Sasquatch. For people to think

otherwise is to simply have no grasp at all of the massive amount of material that we're dealing with. To say that it's all produced by hoaxes spanning the North American continent and spanning the centuries just doesn't make sense. Take the Patterson movie, for instance. I personally discussed it with experts in the Walt Disney organization; they studied it and said they wouldn't be able to duplicate it. So where did the hoaxing come from?

Greenwell: I assume they could do it, but for an extremely high price.

Green: No, they said they couldn't do it at all. If they wanted an effect like that, they would draw it. The only alternative they could suggest would be an actor in a skin-tight suit who was of the same dimensions that that thing was. Those dimensions are such that there is no human being alive who could fill that suit. Not padded; it would have to be skin-tight.

Greenwell: When you say that Sasquatch exists, you know, of course, the implications of that for the scientific world and academia, which has essentially ignored those reports right here, you might say, in their own back yard.

Green: In my opinion, the discovery and study of this animal would probably be by far the most important thing that ever happened in zoology and paleo-anthropology.

Greenwell: Isn't it sort of mind-boggling that such a thing could exist right here, maybe within a few miles of where we're sitting right now?

Green: This is, of course, the basic problem. There is a mind-set that has to be reversed before the problem can be taken seriously. For some years, when I would get away from this for a month or two, I would find that

some mechanism in my mind had made me come to the conclusion that the whole thing had all been explained away, and I would really have to get down to reviewing the evidence again to realize that this conclusion was just an impression, just a sort of emotional feeling. That doesn't happen to me any more. It hasn't happened for a very long time, but I can well understand how it happens to other people. For example, if I were to go and talk to some zoologist or physical anthropologist, and I laid all the accumulated evidence before him, I would probably get him quite excited then and there. It's certainly happened in the past. A couple of weeks later, he will have already been inoculated, and there's just no use ever going near him again. Speaking from actual experience, I know he will say something like: "These footprints you are telling me about are very interesting, but they must be made by grizzly bears with their hind feet overlapping their front feet. If you just had a cast, I could show you what I'm talking about." So when you go back a few months later with some casts, you don't hear that particular suggestion any more, but you hear different ones. For instance--to short-circuit a number of steps--"if you only had a photograph." So you go back with a movie. A few people get excited the first time they see it, but later it's just as if they've received an inoculation against it. This process will go on till the day you lay a specimen down in front of them and say: "Here, study that."

Greenwell: Essentially, what they're saying, then, is that they want you to do their homework. You have to go out and bring in this and that and the other, then bring in the whole animal, then they take over.

Green: Right. Of course, you can't say to an individual, "You have a responsibility to do this." But I think you can say



to the scientific community in general that here we have a body of evidence so great that there are only two possibilities, either that the most interesting animal that could possibly exist does exist today in North America--and it's worth putting resources into looking for it--or else we have here examples of a very strange form of human behavior, one that has been taking place as far back as there are records, and in every civilization--and it merits study from that perspective. There are only two alternatives, and either one of them merits attention.

Greenwell: You said before that there is a vast amount of information. It seems to me that there are two basic problems involved: one is making that evidence available to scientists--how can they have access to it?--the other is, even if you do make it available, and they do have access to it, will they bother to study it?

Green: Basically, no, they won't. I have already done what I think anyone would agree is certainly an adequate job of giving them access.

Greenwell: You published the definitive book....

Green: A number of books. I mailed brochures individually in my own handwriting to every university and public library on the North American continent, and I got several thousand books into major public libraries and university libraries. I have gotten approximately 200,000 books into circulation. The message is out there. I used to go to universities and knock on the doors of zoologists and anthropologists. I've been to the University of California at Los Angeles. I've been to the University of Toronto--that takes me 1,000 miles one way and 3,000 miles the other--and quite a few in between. This was long ago. I finally gave up on it. A lot of people besides myself

have tried the same thing.

Greenwell: How can one solve the second part, then? Getting them to look at the data?

Green: One can't. I always live in hope that someday somebody senior will come along and say, "This looks interesting," and will finally get together a committee that will say, "Okay, do it," but it hasn't happened yet. I have a 3-foot shelf over there of loose-leaf binders stuffed full of background information on Sasquatch events, with over 2,000 index cards on file, and not a single human individual besides myself has ever spent even one full day looking at that material.

Greenwell: How many Sasquatch reports are there in total, and how many of these involve actual sightings?

Green: Well, the last time I counted the cards, in May, 1986, there were 2,249 of them, so there are probably over 2,500 by now. I'd say close to 2,000 would involve actual sightings. However, allowing for the fact that some cards cover more than one sighting, there are probably more than 2,000 reported sightings. Also, since many involve more than one witness, there could easily be 3,000 witnesses involved.

Greenwell: Well, you no doubt have accumulated more information on the subject than anyone else alive. If you were called before a committee, as an adviser or to provide information, what would you present as being the strongest evidence available? If you only had 30 minutes, what would you present?

Green: The Patterson movie and the various people who have done things with it.

Greenwell: You think that is the one strongest piece of evidence there is?

Green: It's the only photo-

graphic evidence of any use at all, and it's good evidence; and there are casts of footprints that go with it, made by two different individuals at totally different times, and there are the analyses that have been done on it. There's certainly no other single thing that compares to it at all. Aside from that, you are really into just this mass of material.

Greenwell: The footprint casts, the hairs, the dermatoglyphics--do you think they represent a pretty strong case?

Green: It reads like a strong case.

Greenwell: What about hairs?

Green: When I first tried to get hairs microscopically analyzed, the information that came back to me as to the state of that particular skill was that the only thing you could do was to keep looking for the same kind of hair for comparative purposes. If you didn't find it, all you had was an unidentified hair. I haven't really pursued this at all. What I'm being told now is that there are people who could say definitely whether or not an unidentified hair was a primate hair, for example, and whether or not it's from a known species.

Greenwell: One can do comparative studies with blood, with hair, and with tissue, but hairs are the easiest to get because they fall off the body. One can do both microscopic and molecular studies, and maybe that might happen if we get enough samples collected.

Green: The problem there is that if you sent out a general call for Sasquatch hair, you'd have a massive job to do, and there's nobody to pay someone to do it. There are probably not very many people who are qualified to do it, and those who are qualified are probably all fully committed.



Greenwell: You also start getting hair sent in by hoaxsters.

Green: Yes, but you'd have more trouble with the well-intentioned people. If a million dollars were allocated, an institute could be set up that did nothing else, and would probably solve the whole problem. There are lots of worse things being done with public money. One thing that has occurred to me in the past is that the right way to go about this might be through a commission of inquiry, the sort of things that Congressional committees do in the United States or the Royal Commissions in Canada, because most of the Sasquatch evidence is the sort of thing that science doesn't deal with and wants no part of. On the other hand, it is exactly the sort of thing that lawyers deal with. If it were a simple matter of whether or not to hang somebody, we would have the evidence to do it many times over.

Greenwell: You mean that a Congressional committee could call upon witnesses to testify, and experts from zoology and anthropology could be called in as witnesses?

Green: Yes, and such expert witnesses could examine the casts, the hairs, and other physical evidence. Presumably such Congressional hearings could lead to Congressional allocation of funding to some institutions to study this matter. We would be dealing with lawyers, the people who are accustomed to evaluating this type of evidence, and also the same people who would be making the decisions--and voting--on the distribution of resources. You see, eyewitness testimony is almost meaningless to scientists; they don't deal with it, they don't trust it--and maybe they're right in that--but, above all, it's simply not their field. Now, most or many politicians are lawyers. If you could get such a Congressional inquiry going, and if part of

their approach would be to listen to eyewitness accounts, and to cross-examine the eyewitnesses, then they would never come to the end of their hearings! There would be a constantly renewed supply of witnesses who are obviously not kooks, who have good reputations, some of them with relevant training and skills, who would keep them going for centuries. I would hope that, very much short of that period, they would reach the conclusion that there was something of substance here worth allocating some resources to.

Greenwell: What you're saying, then, is that the people we should be trying to convince are not the scientists at all, but the politicians.

Green: Yes, but the difficulty there is that, when you go to the politicians, they'll go to the scientists for advice, so you also have to bring the scientists around to the point where they'll say: "Okay, go ahead, we'll study it. I don't believe in it, but I suppose it's worth studying." I think that case has already been made, as we discussed previously: if it isn't important in one way, it's important in the other.

Greenwell: There's a sort of public consciousness about Bigfoot, and a lot of it is negative or derogatory. Do you think that has been caused by the media, like sensational headlines in some tabloid papers, scoffing at it?

Green: Sure. We live in an era where we think we know, and we have a class of people who tell us what we "know" and what we don't "know." In dealing with animals, we talk to the zoologists. Zoologists and paleontologists say there never has been a great ape living in the Americas, and that's the end of that. The zoologist may have a Ph.D., but probably the only thing he knows about great apes in North America is what they

told him back in college--that there weren't any.

Greenwell: It's interesting that the main people in North America who study primates, the primatologists--who are usually anthropologists but sometimes zoologists--do all of their fieldwork in South America, Africa, and Asia. They really have little or no experience in doing fieldwork in North America. It would never occur to them. So they are not "in the field" in North America to encounter Sasquatch, or the evidence for it, in the first place; if they're in the field at all, they're in some other part of the world.

Green: That's valid, certainly.

Greenwell: So the main scientific types who would encounter such evidence in the field are zoologists who are studying the known native animals of North America, and if and when they encountered Sasquatch evidence, or witnesses, they would probably say, "well, we know such a thing is impossible, and I'm not a primatologist -- so that's that."

Green: The situation in zoological fieldwork in North America, from my viewpoint, hasn't changed a great deal over the years. Thirty years ago, when I was first trying to push Sasquatch at them, it seemed to me that most zoologists were studying rodents.

Greenwell: They still are.

Green: That's understandable, because you can find a different species of rodent almost anywhere, and you can write a paper about it. I've made this point in print before. If you're studying grizzly bears, by the time you publish your first paper, the mouse man is head of the department. Nevertheless, it seems that more people are now studying larger mammals, and hopefully this will lead to some of them coming upon things in



the field that may start to crack their resistance a little bit.

Greenwell: I hope that the Society, in a small way, can maybe create an atmosphere where they might feel a little more receptive to even listening to such evidence.

Green: It could. Are you aware of the book called In Search of the Red Ape by primatologist John MacKinnon? He actually admitted finding prints that match the supposedly mythical Batatat, or Orang Pendek while studying orang-utans in Borneo. Maybe this kind of thing will happen in North America.

Greenwell: Getting back to the question of Sasquatch's existence, obviously we don't have many options. Either Sasquatch exists as a biological species, or it doesn't. It's not like some other areas of cryptozoology, where it's more relative. What are your thoughts on that in terms of probability? I know you've given this a lot of thought.

Green: As you say, the situation is that either there are Sasquatches or there are not, either there is an animal or there isn't. And if there is no such animal, then 100 percent of the reports are invalid. On the other hand, if there is such an animal, then it immediately becomes the most likely cause for all the reports, and it seems reasonable to assume that a high percentage of them are valid, and that the vast majority of these stories will involve actual sightings of this animal, or evidence of this animal. Then there is a whole category of evidence that I, for one, don't deal with. Things like unidentifiable screams, or dogs being flung against houses, because they don't involve either the existence of a very large humanlike footprint, or a sighting of a large, bipedal, hair-covered creature. If you can prove that Sasquatch does

exist, then this may become the best explanation for those other things too. If something happens that sounds like the behavior of a bear, you assume it involves a bear. Certainly if someone describes seeing a bear, you assume it was a bear because you know there are bears. So if you know there are Sasquatches, your evaluation of Sasquatch reports ought to be on approximately the same level as your evaluation of bear reports. Most of them would probably be correct, even if the witness might have been drunk or even insane; if there's a real animal, drunken people and insane people are just as likely to see it as anybody else. Fleeting glimpses are almost as good as a close look because, with the exception of perhaps someone who really wants to see a Sasquatch, if you see a bear or a man, it's most likely to look like a bear or a man. If you haven't had a good look at it, you're not going to go around saying it's a Sasquatch. So that's what the chief significance of it is to me. If you're talking about whether there are cougars in the East, for instance, if you prove one is there now, there are lots of places it could have come from. It could have been introduced, so that isn't the same. Or if you're talking about the Onza, there certainly is another animal--the cougar--that can be mistaken for it.

Greenwell: These are relative differences. What you're talking about here is an absolute difference.

Green: Either there is an animal that makes footprints 15-16 inches and up, and walks like a human, or there isn't. If it is proved that there is, then you've got to look at all this material over again in a new light, so you'll wish you hadn't thrown away a lot of the things that you didn't think were credible. What's important is that you accumulate information, in case it's of use sometime; it's not really that important to

evaluate what you're accumulating.

Greenwell: You never know what information you'll need in the future. That's why we have libraries.

Green: And your opinion as to whether it's valid information or not is irrelevant. In order to assess the probability of a report being valid, you have to decide first whether there is such a thing as a Sasquatch or not, but that's the thing you're trying to find out. Evaluating reports depends on making that decision first, so there's no point in it.

Greenwell: I've asked this question before in other interviews. You've probably been asked it many times, too. What would you do if, all of a sudden, bang, it happens; someone calls you up and they've shot one of these animals, and you had access to it before anyone; you had control of the situation. After all these years and decades, what would you do? Who would you call?

Green: I would call a place like the Regional Primate Center at the University of Washington, in Seattle. I would suggest getting it across the Canada-U.S. border surreptitiously. Also, if you can get it into a jurisdiction different from the one where it was shot, you have a better chance of hanging onto it. And if you have it in the possession of the right person to do the study, there is no excuse at all to take it anywhere else. I know the people in Seattle have the facilities to freeze it immediately, and they have the skill to dissect and make the proper comparisons. In all probability, they are the best-qualified persons to do it, at least in the Northwest.

Greenwell: Do you support the idea of killing one of these animals, like Grover Krantz does? That it's justified in order to provide a specimen?



Green: Of course.

Greenwell: Without qualification?

Green: Without any qualification. If we're dealing with a man or something within the genus Homo, you can't kill it; if we're dealing with an animal, which I am certain we are, mankind kills animals by the millions, so let's have a sensible reason why you shouldn't kill this particular animal.

Greenwell: Once you prove it exists, it might even become more protected.

Green: Maybe. Actually, I don't believe Sasquatch to be endangered. With the type of terrain they inhabit, they have it all to themselves over millions of square miles. If they are in danger through any human activity, it's not because we're hunting them. It's because we're destroying their habitat. It wouldn't be logging that would be destroying the species, because logging, over the complete cycle, actually provides new habitats for animals. What would be destroying Sasquatch's habitat would be situations such as, for instance, in Florida, where subdivisions are eliminating the wilderness areas.

Greenwell: So, it's encroachment?

Green: Yes. How do you get protection from the real estate industry in a booming state like Florida? How do you get legislative protection for an imaginary animal? If you prove the species exists, perhaps by killing just one individual, you then have a case, and you can start identifying places where human activity could be encroaching on them, and do something about it. But quite aside from that, I think this is the most important animal, physically anyway, for the study of humans themselves, because it is the only kind that walks in a manner similar to ourselves. I

would bet that, if somebody goes to tremendous time, expense, and difficulty, and has absolutely miraculous luck and catches one alive, there are going to be many of them dissected over the subsequent decades anyhow. You simply can't learn enough about them if you don't also study their internal anatomy and physiology, and prestigious institutions will therefore be going after permits. In the end, you probably won't have saved any of them from being killed by advocating those ridiculously long odds of capturing one as against killing one.

Greenwell: But in the United States the animal would probably be placed rapidly on the Endangered Species List by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which would protect it from being taken at all by individuals or institutions.

Green: To get it on the Endangered Species List, they'd first have to make a case that it is, in fact, endangered, and I don't think that can be done so easily.

Greenwell: Well, they'd have to do an environmental impact study or assessment, and that could actually take years. Also, there could be a lot of political problems that might involve commercial interests, such as the logging industry.

Green: I suppose there could be a hysterical reaction that this has to be designated an endangered species. In cold analysis, however, it's one of the most successful species the world has ever seen. As you know if you've read the literature, it's inhabiting many parts of every continent on Earth. If you have them here, you certainly have them in the other places where they're also being reported. In order to argue that one of these should not be killed, you have to have a good reason. If you give this subject considerable thought, as I have done, I don't think you can come up

with any good reason--except, of course, their physical similarity to ourselves.

Greenwell: We seem to do a pretty good job of killing ourselves anyway.

Green: That's another point I could have made, yes; we don't make much of killing humans, so even that isn't much of a reason. About 20 years ago, I came to the realization that there was no prospect of the few people who were actively trying to collect one of these creatures actually doing so, that the odds were simply not good enough to justify spending your time in the bush. If that's what you want to do, fine, but as a practical way of bringing this to a conclusion, the odds are simply not acceptable. It seemed to me that the way to do it was to get the message to the hundreds of thousands of hunters who are out in the bush with guns, that this thing is very important, and that, if they had the opportunity, it was very important that they should kill it; and, moreover, not depart from it without bringing in physical evidence. I tried to get this message out there through writing books. Unfortunately, the timing coincided just about exactly with the rise of the concerned environmentalists, and the opposite message was disseminated much more effectively than mine, so I don't feel that I succeeded in that regard. That's how far I am committed to the conviction that, yes, it's an animal, yes, it's important, and therefore, since it is obviously not endangered, and since it is obviously not human, the only thing to do is to bring one in if there is an opportunity to do so.

Greenwell: One final question. You have spent decades doing this, publishing books on it, and speaking to a lot of witnesses. Essentially, it seems to me, you've done just about all you can do. What are your plans now? Are you going to just sort



of wait and see what happens? Is there anything else that you can do, or advise other people that they can do, to resolve this problem?

**Green:** Quite frankly, I am not very optimistic about being able to do anything effective. What I am doing now is simply continuing to compile information, which is available to anyone who wishes to make a serious study of any sort. I'm doing it without much hope of any actual effect. In fact, it seems that the more information I accumulate, the more intimidating it becomes, and the less likely that scientists will actually

look at it seriously.

**Greenwell:** Are you less enthusiastic than you were 20 or 30 years ago?

**Green:** Thirty years ago, when we were finding footprints in California, we thought all we had to do was be out there with rifles and we'd come back with one before very long. I don't have that kind of enthusiasm any more. It's quite obvious that I could spend a lifetime first learning to be a hunter, which I am not, and then hunting, and the odds would still be against accomplishing anything.

**Greenwell:** You seem to be both an optimist and a realist.

**Green:** If it's optimism to be convinced by the evidence that there is such an animal, then I am an optimist. If it's a matter of whether I'll see that established in my own lifetime, no, I'm not an optimist. I've been at it for over 30 years, and I probably don't have another 30 years ahead of me. Many others who have worked on this problem have not lived to see it resolved, and the existence of the animal established. I'd like to think otherwise, but I don't really expect to be the exception. □

## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

What is a society? This question has surfaced in my mind numerous times over the past several years in connection with our own little effort.

The International Society of Cryptozoology is composed of about 850 members. They come from all walks of life and all social ranks in numerous countries (75 percent are in North America--70 percent in the United States alone; 20 percent are in Europe; and 5 percent are in other parts of the world). Many are professionals in their respective fields, some highly regarded; others are laymen with a keen intellectual interest in the problems of cryptozoology. Whatever their backgrounds, all come to the Society with their own particular experiences, knowledge, insights, and thoughts.

It is to be expected, therefore, that many members will have their own personal perspectives on cryptozoology, and ideas on how the Society should address such perspectives. I think that, by now, I have heard most if not all the possible arguments which can be marshaled in favor of this or that perspective or proposal, from the

most conservative to the most outrageous, from the most practical to the most harebrained. For the benefit of all, I would like to share, in summary form, some of the more important concerns expressed by members over the years.

To some, the Society should be an active, advocacy organization, lobbying for the merits of cryptozoological realities; others--a majority, I believe--feel that this would detract from its purely scientific aims, preferring it the way it is: a neutral society providing a forum for discussion and publication, without taking a position on the existence of certain kinds of cryptids or on individual claims.

Some see the Society as too liberal, with too much emphasis placed on Bigfeet and Nessies, and not enough attention being paid to some of the less sensational cryptozoological candidates. Others, on the other hand, regard the Society as stiflingly conservative, and believe that it should boldly publish all kinds of claims, no matter how bizarre.

As would be expected, a cer-

tain segment of the membership prefers the journal, Cryptozoology, to the newsletter, and some would like to see two journal issues per year. Others have less interest in the journal, and would prefer, instead, a semi-monthly newsletter. And so it goes.

I could also mention that, to some, getting the publications on time seems to be very important. To others--the majority--it really doesn't matter that many of the publications are late (provided they do eventually appear); to them, what is more important is the quality of the publications, and the reliability of the information they contain.

All these individuals with different educational and professional backgrounds, different perspectives, and different priorities, are nevertheless bound together by one common interest: cryptozoology. Thus, the Board and the officers of the Society have attempted to maintain a reasonable balance, and to make the Society responsive to the perspectives and priorities of at least the majority of its members.

One final note: we should remember that, regardless of his or her own particular perspective, when an individual joins



the Society, he or she is not just paying to get some publications. A member becomes part of something. Wherever a member happens to live, or be at any given time, a part of the Society is also there. And, hopefully, that member will then share any insights he or she may have with other members. This can happen at the annual member-

ship meetings, in the journal or newsletter, or through private correspondence.

Thus we are all enriched. That is what a Society is all about.

J. Richard Greenwell  
Editor

## NOTE TO HISTORIANS

The founding of the International Society of Cryptozoology took place at a meeting held in January, 1982, in the Department of Vertebrate Zoology, U.S. National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

This meeting, hosted by founding Board member George Zug, has always been designated the First Annual Board Meeting. The structure and function of the Society was formulated and agreed upon at the this meeting; it was not accompanied by the usual annual membership meeting, as there were no members yet.

Later in 1982, in October, a Special Board Meeting was held to address numerous policy matters. This meeting was held at the University of British Columbia, hosted by Board member Paul LeBlond, who also organized a "public forum," which included talks by Roy Mackal and Grover Krantz. Vancouver-area members attended, as well as the general public.

In 1983, Board member Joseph Gennaro hosted what was called the Second Annual Board Meeting, followed on the next day by the First Annual Membership Meeting. Ever since then, the Board and membership meetings have been out of synchronization. To solve this problem, the Board has decided to stretch its long arm back into history and rectify the situation.

The first 1982 Smithsonian

meeting will in the future be recognized as the Founding Board Meeting. The 1982 Vancouver meetings will be the First Annual Board Meeting and the First Annual Membership Meeting; the 1983 New York meetings will be the Second Annual Board Meeting and the Second Annual Membership Meeting, and so forth through the years.

Thus, the 1989 meetings in Pullman, Washington, were the Eighth Annual Board Meeting and the Eighth Annual Membership Meeting. Most members will have little interest in all of this, but it was decided to nevertheless place the changes on record for future scholars and historians.

Annual Membership Meetings have been held as follows (institutional hosts in parentheses):

1982 - University of British Columbia, Vancouver (Department of Oceanography), Paul LeBlond, chairman.

1983 - New York University, New York City (Department of Biology), Joseph Gennaro, chairman.

1984 - University of Paris VI, Paris (Laboratory of Vertebrate and Human Paleontology), Eric Buffetaut, chairman.

1985 - Hubbs Seaworld Research Institute, San Diego, Forrest Wood (U.S. Naval Ocean Systems Center), chairman.

1986 - University of Chicago (Department of Biology), Roy Mackal, chairman.

1987 - Royal Museum of Scotland (National Museums of Scotland), Edinburgh, (Department of Natural History), David Heppell, chairman.

1988 - University of Maryland, College Park (Department of Zoology), Eugenie Clark, chairwoman.

1989 - Washington State University, Pullman (Department of Anthropology), Grover Krantz, chairman.

The Ninth Annual Membership Meeting will be held in conjunction with Britain's Folklore Society at the University of Surrey, Guildford, in July, 1990 (see separate article in this issue). □

"Intolerant dogmatism...is one of the main obstacles to science. Indeed, we should not only keep alternative theories alive by discussing them, but we should systematically look for new alternatives; and we should be worried whenever a dominant theory becomes too exclusive. The danger to progress in science is much increased if the theory in question obtains something like a monopoly."

Sir Karl Popper  
"The Rationality of Scientific Revolutions,"  
in Scientific Revolutions  
(Ian Hacking, ed.)  
Oxford University Press, 1981

"Seeking knowledge for one hour is better than praying for seventy years."

The Prophet Mohammed



## 1990 MEETING PLANNED FOR ENGLAND

The Ninth Annual Membership Meeting of the Society has been scheduled for July 19-22, 1990, at the University of Surrey, in Guildford, England. This will be the second Membership Meeting held in Britain, but the first in England. Guildford is located about 30 miles southwest of London, and may be easily reached by train from Waterloo Station in 40 minutes.

As with the 1987 meeting held in Edinburgh, Scotland, jointly with the Society for the History of Natural History, the 1990 meeting will also be co-sponsored by a distinguished British body: The Folklore Society, founded in 1878. This new joint meeting will take the form of a conference entitled "Fabulous Beasts: Fact and Folklore."

The Folklore Society approached ISC in 1988 proposing a joint conference, a proposal which was accepted by the ISC Board. Speakers from both societies will make presentations, and these will generally address subjects in the realm of zoological and cryptozoological folklore.

About 15 papers have been proposed so far by speakers from both societies, and it is anticipated that about two dozen presentations will be made over the 3-day period of July 20-22. An opening dinner will be held on the evening of July 19. Individuals wishing to present papers should request abstract forms from the ISC Secretariat; after completion, such forms should be returned to the Secretariat.

ISC Membership Meetings are generally free of charge. The Society has never tried to "make money" from its members through charging high registration fees, as many other societies tend to do. However, in this case, because of the nature of the meeting and the inclusion of lodging and meals in the costs, a registration fee is involved.

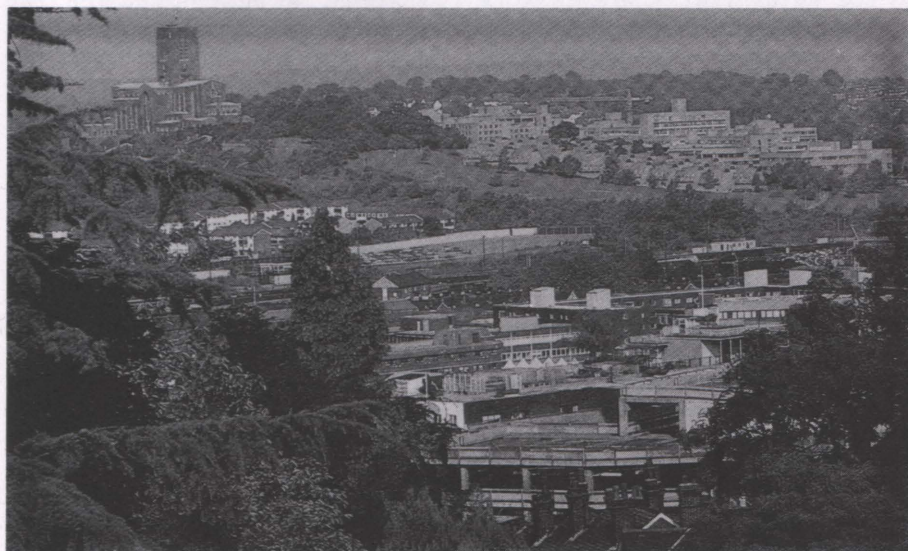
The registration fee is £95, and includes accommodation at the University of Surrey and all meals, from dinner on Thursday the 19th to tea on Sunday the 22nd. This fee will increase to £115 on March 1, so members are urged to register and pay as

soon as possible. All payments should be in pounds sterling and checks or bank drafts should be made payable to "Fabulous Beasts Conference."

For American members, £95 is about \$152, and £115 about \$184, at the current dollar/pound rate of exchange; they may obtain a pound draft through their local bank, and such a draft should be drawn against a British bank.

Payments should be mailed directly to Roy Vickery, Secretary, The Folklore Society, 12 Eastwood Street, London SW16 6PK, England. ISC members needing additional details on the conference may also reach him by telephone at the British Museum (Natural History): 1/938-8897. Some accommodation will be made for those members wishing to attend only part of the conference, or those not needing lodging or meals.

Further details, including the titles of papers to be presented, will appear in forthcoming newsletters. It is hoped that the Guildford conference will attract many European ISC members, and American members planning vacations in Europe in 1990 are also urged to include the meeting in their travel plans. □



The University of Surrey (top center) and Guildford Cathedral (top left) overlook Guildford (bottom center), in the countryside of southern England. The University of Surrey is where the Society's 1990 Membership Meeting will be held, in conjunction with Britain's Folklore Society, July 19-22.

"Why animals and plants are as they are, we shall never know; how they came to be what they are, our knowledge will always be extremely fragmentary; but that organisms are as they are, that apart from members of our own species they are our only companions in an infinite and unsympathetic waste of electrons, planets, nebulae, and stars, is a perennial joy and consolation."

William Morton Wheeler  
American entomologist



## CRYPTOLETTERS

*The Editor welcomes letters from readers on any topic related to cryptozoology, but reserves the right to shorten them or to make slight changes to improve style and clarity, but not meaning.*

To the Editor:

I would like to express my views on the hunting and killing of Sasquatch and other cryptids, as discussed by Dmitri Bayanov (*Newsletter*, Summer, 1988). Bayanov stated that the hunting and killing method is only encouraged in the case of human-like cryptids. To begin with, I would like to outline three factors which could lead to this encouragement.

First, establishment science will not be convinced by photos, films, or footprint casts. Scientists want a specimen on the table. Second, the fear of the unknown stimulates the need for killing. And third, some people like to hunt and kill for fun or sport.

Dr. Krantz seems to belong to the first category, and is on the wrong track; it cannot be in the interest of science to kill a specimen of a probably rare species just because there is an urge to find out what kind of animal we are dealing with. When scientists promote this hunting and killing method, people in the second and third categories might feel free to do their part in the slaughter. An important stimulus to those in the second category might be the supposition that the Sasquatch is much closer to humans than other cryptids, and may even in some ways be superior as we "civilized" people are increasingly losing contact with nature.

I cannot fully agree with Bayanov that the Sasquatch is the only cryptid which is threatened by the hunting and

killing method. In my own particular field of study, the Loch Ness phenomena, people have been hunting for years. Some tried it the hard way, with automatic weapons and explosives (fortunately, they were "discouraged" before they could act); others have used baited hooks and cages -- all methods to possibly catch a Nessie that could quite possibly lead to its death.

I, on the other hand, agree with Alastair Boyd (*Cryptoleters*, *Newsletter*, Summer, 1988), and prefer to sit at lochside with a camera than to try to speed things up by using methods that might do more harm than good.

I think it should be a policy of the Society to promote conservation of cryptozoological animals, and not encourage and glorify their killing. A good example of this glorifying appeared in the Spring, 1988, newsletter concerning the Onza. A certain Dale Lee was presented as the hero of puma killing and an American hunter par excellence.

I will not deny that this person might be an important witness in the Onza case, but I do not think that there is more to him than that; at least, he is not worth that much admiring attention. People like that can cause the extinction of a species because they love killing.

Martien 't Mannetje  
Rockanje, Holland

*The Society does not--and cannot--"glorify" the killing of animals. The Policy Statement from the Board of Directors, published in the Autumn, 1984, newsletter, removes the Society from taking any position on the method of proving the existence of cryptozoological animals, including the collection of specimens (although individual members are free to hold and voice their own opinions). The conservation of species is not a task for the Society, but for*

*the many existing conservation organizations.*

*Concerning the late Dale Lee, the newsletter article in question attempted to objectively present the facts about him, his hunting record, and how he was regarded in the hunting world. These facts will surely be unpleasant to those who dislike hunting, but they are still facts. The fact that Lee had taken almost 500 puma in his hunting career is relevant to the reliability to be placed on his 1938 claim of having shot a cat which was like a puma, but not a puma. No glorification of Mr. Lee or of hunting was intended.--Editor*

To the Editor:

Dmitri Bayanov wonders why the Sasquatch is the only cryptozoological creature that some people are trying to hunt and shoot (*Newsletter*, Summer 1988). A cryptozoologist would advocate killing one specimen only as a method of proving that the species exists. There are at least three reasons why this is more pertinent for the Sasquatch than for most other cryptids.

First, a dead Sasquatch can be retrieved, in whole or in part, for scientific examination. A dead Nessie or some other aquatic cryptid would most likely be lost.

Second, because of the sensationalism surrounding the Sasquatch, the faking of evidence is rampant in North America. I estimate that half of our data is in error; most scientists assume all of it is wrong. It is not enough that preferred Sasquatch evidence have a high probability of truth; it must be beyond all possible question. Only a body or skeleton (or parts of one) will satisfy the skeptics in this case.

Third, that Sasquatch may be more closely related to humans than any other cryptid makes its



recognition especially important and urgent. Established primatologists will not study its ecological needs, and governments cannot propose protection, until its existence is conclusively demonstrated. If we wait until some more humane kind of proof is forthcoming, the Sasquatch may become extinct in the meantime. Only later might we say: "This could have been prevented if only we had known..."

Every accepted animal species has been demonstrated with a dead specimen, or a part of one. Cryptozoology is no exception. I have probably tried harder than anyone to find acceptable proof of the Sasquatch without actually shooting an individual. But I am also a realist about how it most likely will occur.

Grover S. Krantz  
Department of Anthropology  
Washington State University  
Pullman, Washington, U.S.A.

To the Editor:

In the early 1960's, I read an interesting magazine article about a creature never mentioned in the cryptozoological works I have seen. The author delved into the widespread American Indian legend of the Thunderbird, said to be a divine being that brought lightning and thunder.

Some of the legends speak of the Thunderbird more as a real, if awesome animal rather than a mythological being. One story, from the Pueblo Indians, tells of large, eagle-like birds that can carry off children, and even threaten adult humans. Some frontiersmen, including Davy Crockett, also reported encountering such birds.

Until fairly recently, it was thought that a bird with a wingspan of 25ft or more was not aerodynamically possible. But then, aerodynamic theory had also "proven" that the bumblebee could not fly. More recent stud-

ies have produced a revised picture of animal flight, and, a few years ago, a fossil condor with an estimated wingspan of 24ft was unearthed in Argentina. So, the Indian Thunderbird may be a biological possibility after all.

There have also been many present-day sightings reported, such as by numerous inhabitants of a small town in Pennsylvania. More recently, reports of a huge bird have been made by people living in southern Illinois and Indiana.

I find it hard to accept that a hawk or an eagle could have created so many reports. Have there been any ISC articles or symposium presentations on this topic?

Albert S. Zeller  
San Francisco, California  
U.S.A.

*Thunderbirds have not yet been directly addressed in ISC publications or meetings. However, a new book on the subject has just appeared: Thunderbirds! The Living Legend of Giant Birds, by Mark A. Hall, 104 pp., paper, \$16.95, postpaid. Order from the author at 9215 Nicollet S., #104, Bloomington, MN 55420, U.S.A. It will be included in a forthcoming Newsletter bibliography on new books, and it will also be reviewed in Cryptozoology.--Editor*

To the Editor:

In accordance with previous comments by Bernard Heuvelmans on the possible factual core of some animal legends, I would like to make a comment on a possible basis for a Western animal legend, a suggestion which I believe has not been made before: that the Western "dragon" (cf. Beowulf) is ultimately based on a Byzantine fire-carrying warship beneath its python accretions (Byzantine "dragon ship" with Greek fire).

Germans and Scandinavians were mercenaries in Byzantium/Constantinople, and clearly that place was the largest pot-of-gold known to the ancient West. Fire-carrying dragon ships would be also "poisonous" through smoke inhalation. Finally, sails may be compared to bird wings for flying (I believe an Ode of the Roman Horace speaks of ships "flying" across the Mediterranean).

In any event, this suggestion seems to me to be worth making, though, of course, it is difficult to "prove."

Hugh H. Trotti, Jr.  
Decatur, Georgia, U.S.A.

To the Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how much I enjoy being a member of ISC. Although my university studies necessarily occupy most of my time at present, my interest in all things cryptozoological remains strong.

Let me say that the work you do, and the efforts of concerned scholars in areas pertaining to this discipline, have been of a truly professional caliber, and are of value to us all, not merely to academics.

I am delighted with the quality of the Society's publications, and I am genuinely proud of the integrity of our little organization and its achievements. Best wishes for the future!

David J. DeLucca  
Sarasota, Florida, U.S.A.

"Oh investigator, do not flatter yourself that you know the things nature performs for herself, but rejoice in knowing the purpose of those things designed by your own mind."

Leonardo da Vinci  
Italian scientist and artist  
Ms. G47r



## WOOD'S ANIMAL FACTS

The largest living primate is the mountain gorilla (Gorilla gorilla beringei) of the volcanic mountain ranges of W Rwanda, SW Uganda, and E Zaire. The average adult male "stands" 5ft, 6in (1.68m) tall (because the gorilla cannot stand fully erect like man, the measurement is taken between pegs placed at the crown and heel in the supine position).

The tallest gorilla ever shot in the field was probably a male of the mountain race collected by Commandant E. Hubert and Dr. Serge Freckhof at Alimbongo, N. Kivu, on May 16, 1938. This specimen measured 6ft, 4.75in (1.95m). Another male of the mountain race collected by the Percy Sladen Expedition to the N. Cameroons in 1932-33 must have stood about 6ft, 3in (1.9m).

Fred G. Merfield, another reliable English observer, who collected 115 western lowland gorillas for European museums

over a 4-year period (1918-22) while he was a planter in the Mendjim Mey, French Cameroons, says he only shot one male standing over 6ft (1.8m). The skeleton of this gorilla was later presented to the Science Museum of the University of Texas, where primatologists estimated that the animal must have stood over 6ft (1.8m) in life.

In 1934, the George Vanderbilt African Expedition collected a very large male of the western lowland race which had been killed by natives in the neighborhood of Aboghi in the Sanga River area, French Equatorial Africa. This gorilla measured exactly 6 ft (1.8m) between sticks. The mounted specimen is now on display at the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The tallest gorilla ever held in captivity was a very slender male of the mountain race called Baltimore Jack, who measured a

remarkable 6ft, 3in (1.91m) in the standing position. This exhibit...had exceptionally long legs for a gorilla, was received at the Baltimore Zoo, Maryland, in 1956, and was sold to the Phoenix Zoo, Arizona, in 1970. He died two years later, and his body is now preserved in formaldehyde at Arizona State University.

The greatest reliable weight recorded for a gorilla in the field is the 482lb (219kg) for the large male shot by Commander Attilio Gatti in the Tchibinda Forest, near Lake Kivu, in 1930. The heaviest gorilla ever held in captivity was probably a male of the mountain race named N'gagi, who died in the San Diego Zoo, California, on January 12, 1944. He scaled 683lb (310kg) at his heaviest in 1943. He was 5ft, 7.75in (1.72m) tall, and boasted a record chest measurement of 78in (198cm).

Abstracted from:

The Guinness Book of Animal Facts and Feats, by Gerald L. Wood, Guinness Superlatives, Enfield, U.K. (3rd ed.), 1982.

*Honorary Members:* Andre Capart (Belgium); Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer (South Africa); John Green (Canada); The Lord Hunt of Llanfair Waterdine (U.K.); Marie-Jeanne Koffmann (U.S.S.R.); Ingo Krumbiegel (Federal German Republic); Theodore Monod (France); Sir Peter Scott (U.K.); Robert Titmus (Canada).

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